

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6907

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T TAIPEI 5811

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CH

SUBJECT: THE YELLOW PERIL

REFS: (A) MANILA 12240; (B) TOKYO 12347

1. AS WAS NO DOUBT ANTICIPATED, I AM PROMPTLY RISING TO THE BAIT CAST BY BILL SULLIVAN IN PARAGRAPH 14 OF HIS YELLOW PERIL PHASE II MESSAGE. THERE ARE MANY OTHER POINTS TO BE ADDRESSED IN HIS PROVOCATIVE TELEGRAM BUT AT THIS POINT I WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS OUR "RECOGNITION POLICY" FOR CHINA, AND WHETHER SUCH CONTROL AS WE HAVE OVER THE TAIWAN SITUATION COULD BE USED TO DETER THE PRC FROM SEEKING TO EXERCISE HEGEMONY OVER SOUTHEAST ASIA AND "JOIN WITH US IN ENCOURAGING THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN STATES TO ACHIEVE TRUE INDEPENDENCE".

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2. OUR RECOGNITION POLICY IS CONTAINED IN THE SHANGHAI

COMMUNIQUE. I AM NOT CLEAR WHAT MANILA'S REFTTEL MEANS BY FORMAL CHANGES IN THAT POLICY, BUT I CAN SUGGEST TWO POSSIBILITIES:

(A) ALTHOUGH IT HARDLY SEEMS A "FORMAL CHANGE", PERHAPS THE CHANGE REFERRED TO WOULD BE RAPID MOVEMENT TO FULL NORMALIZATION (I.E. DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION OF PRC AND DERECOGNITION OF THE ROC); PRESUMABLY THIS WOULD ENTAIL AN ACCELERATION OF WHATEVER IS THE PRESENTLY CONTEMPLATED TIMETABLE FOR NORMALIZATION. I DON'T KNOW WHAT PEKING'S ORIGINAL UNDERSTANDINGS WERE ABOUT HOW QUICKLY FULL NORMALIZATION WOULD BE ACHIEVED BUT I QUESTION WHETHER WE COULD EXPECT TO EXTRACT FROM THE PRC ANY SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS IN THIS MANNER.

(B) THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN OUR RECOGNITION POLICY WHICH I CAN PERCEIVE WHICH WOULD BE "FORMAL" AND QUITE PLEASING TO THE PRC WOULD BE TO ABANDON OUR POSITION FAVORING A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN PROBLEM BY THE CHINESE THEMSELVES, AND TO SUBSTITUTE FOR THAT AN ACQUIESCENCE, AT LEAST, IN A SOLUTION IMPOSED BY THE PRC ON TAIWAN. THAT WOULD INVOLVE US, ALBEIT LARGELY PASSIVELY, IN A COURSE WHICH WOULD PROVOKE SHARP AND WIDESPREAD CRITICISM AT HOME AND A FURTHER LOSS OF CONFIDENCE WORLDWIDE IN OUR WORD AND THE VALUE OF OUR FRIENDSHIP. IT COULD PRECIPITATE ON TAIWAN DESPERATE ACTIONS, SUCH AS THE DECLARATION OF AN INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC OF TAIWAN, WHICH COULD LEAD TO CHAOS ON THIS ISLAND AND THE ARMED INTERVENTION HERE OF THE PRC, WITH THE DILEMMAS THAT WOULD POSE FOR U.S. POLICY.

3. OUR PRESENT RECOGNITION POLICY AS FAR AS I AM ABLE TO DISCERN WOULD ENTAIL, IN ITS EXECUTION, A TWO-STAGE MOVEMENT FROM THE CURRENT STATE OF RELATIONS TO THE ULTIMATE "SOLUTION OF THE TAIWAN QUESTION" MENTIONED IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. STEP ONE, INVOLVING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE PRC AND DERECOGNITION OF THE ROC, SEEMS TO ME ALSO TO ENVISAGE THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF A VIABLE NATIONAL ENTITY ON TAIWAN WITH UNOFFICIAL BUT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TRADE AND INVESTMENT RELATIONS AROUND THE WORLD AND ESPECIALLY WITH THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN. ALTHOUGH SUCH A NATIONAL ENTITY WOULD HAVE AT BEST ONLY LIMITED SECURITY ASSURANCES FROM US AND LESS

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ACCESS THAN TODAY TO U.S. MILITARY SUPPLIES, IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE PRC WOULD BE DETERRED FROM ATTEMPTING MILITARY ANNEXATION, AMONG OTHER REASONS BECAUSE OF ITS INTEREST IN MAINTAINING GOOD RELATIONS WITH US.

4. STAGE TWO WOULD BE REACHED AT THAT TIME WHEN EVOLVING ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS ON TAIWAN, THE MAINLAND OR BOTH WOULD PERMIT A PEACEFUL ACCOMMODATION, WITH TAIWAN COMING IN

SOME FASHION UNDER PEKING'S RULE.

5. THE PLAYING OUT OF OUR CURRENT RECOGNITION POLICY ACCORDING TO MY INTERPRETATION AS DESCRIBED ABOVE IS IN ITSELF AN EXTREMELY PRECARIOUS EXERCISE, INVOLVING A NUMBER OF KNOTTY QUESTIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES WHICH HAVE YET TO BE SATISFACTORILY WORKED OUT. ALSO, THIS WILL REQUIRE AT LEAST SOME LIMITED COOPERATION OR FORBEARANCE BY THE PRC. EVEN THIS POLICY, ASSUMING IT CAN BE PUT INTO EXECUTION SUCCESSFULLY, IS VERY DIMLY REGARDED IN SOME QUARTERS (NOT ONLY IN TAIWAN); TO CONTEMPLATE A "FORMAL CHANGE IN OUR RECOGNITION POLICY" WHICH WOULD BE REGARDED BY THE PRC AS A SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION ON OUR PART (I.E. ALONG THE LINES DESCRIBED IN 2(B) ABOVE) MUST IMPLY OUR MOVING TOWARD A PROGRAM WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY BE ACUTELY UNPOPULAR BUT LIKELY TO GENERATE FOR THE UNITED STATES DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, SOME OF THEM QUITE GRAVE AND COMPLEX.

6. IN OTHER WORDS, OUR PRESENT RECOGNITION POLICY WILL BE AN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT ONE TO EXECUTE WITHOUT CREATING PROBLEMS MORE GRAVE THAN THE ONES WHICH IT WAS INTENDED TO SOLVE. CHANGING TO A POLICY CALCULATED TO WIN SOME CONCESSIONS FROM THE PRC WITH REGARD TO ITS INTENTIONS TOWARD SOUTHEAST ASIA CAN ONLY MEAN MOVING TOWARD AN EVEN MORE DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS PROGRAM AS FAR AS THE TAIWAN QUESTION IS CONCERNED.
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